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## KANT'S ETHICS.

By JAMES EDMUNDS.

III.—*Ethico-active Reason.*

§ 25. Man (*homo phenomenon*) knows himself to be possessed of a faculty (wherewith he knows) which does not seem to belong to the world of nature (*mundus sensibilis*). This he cogitates to be a FACULTY, knowing himself obliged to its use and exercise. But since no supersensible faculty could possibly belong to a solely sensuous existence (thing), he thinks this faculty as (quasi) belonging to a supersensible man (person, *homo noumenon*), an intelligent. This boldest dictum he formulates in the apodictic supersensible-axiom of DES CARTES, “*cogito, ergo sum.*”

§ 26. That of which this unquestionable deliverance of consciousness declares the being, is neither body nor soul (for a demonstrated world of souls can be no other than a sensible world). It is the philosophic EGO, of which we predicate intelligible existence. We declare him to be an intelligent, the possessor of the faculty reason. That is all.

§ 27. Speaking after the analogy of the world (for in truth an intelligent, having no external relations, can form no part of a congeries, much less of a world, and therefore cannot act), the EGO is said to belong to a world (*mundus intelligibilis*, a convenient philosophic fiction) and to be in that world an agent. His rule is the law of reason, which immediately determines the will, no foreign determinator (*mobile*) being possible. But no sooner does he enter into the phenomenal world than he finds himself in his phenomenal (external) character subjected to the law of that world, mechanical necessity, which thrusts itself upon his will and (if not resisted) violently determines it.

§ 28. Now if he (*homo phenomenon*) were absolutely subjected to natural necessity, it were absurd to speak of his will as free, since it must be always externally determined. If again he, being in the natural world, were absolutely subjected to the law of reason (an intelligent in the world but not of it, *homo noumenon* among phenomena,—an absurd supposition), it were equally absurd (at least superfluous) to

speaking of his will as free; since, though independent of natural determination, it is by hypothesis subjected to self and admits but one determination, ethic necessity. But in actual fact and event he knows himself independent on natural necessity, since he may enforce self-determination in the very face of natural necessity; and (as it were) equally independent on his own reason, since he may (if he so will) degrade himself to the purely animal level and resolutely deny to reason her rightful command: in other words, he recognizes in himself that curious compound, free humanity, which is of the very essence of two worlds yet compelled in neither, which may elevate itself at will toward the higher or degrade itself in the lower, which builds its own heaven or digs its own hell.

§ 29. But because the rational agent is free to permit the determination of his will by either the mechanic necessity which appertains to his phenomenal character or the moral necessity which is the law of his intelligible character, it must not be concluded that he is independent of both worlds (dependent on neither). Any such definition of freedom must be excluded from philosophic terminology, for the reason that the conception possesses no value whatever (not to insist that it is not true, insomuch as it represents the agent neither as intelligent nor as phenomenon nor as a compound of the two, but as some incogitable nondescript).

§ 30. The philosophic conception of freedom is simply independence on foreign determinators. And since ethico-rational necessity is (so far as can be concluded upon rational ground) no other than proper (absolutely internal) determination, the conception freedom of will is equivalent to subjection to the moral law, which last is but self law, reason cogitated as efficient in form of law and acting according to the representation of law. He who represents freedom, whether in the schools or in the state, as lawlessness, is laughed at.

§ 31. Speculative reason is reason (in her character of ratio phenomenon, the only character in which she views herself to herself objected, and so knows herself) beholding herself, and endeavoring by the aid of her indubitable fact consciousness to retrace the processes of the workings of her thought, thereby discovering for the behoof of her finite phenomenal self her veritable and absolute ethical self.

§ 32. Practical reason is reason (in her character of FACULTY, ratio noumenon, the only character in which she can cogitate herself as possessed of energy) phenomenizing herself, obtruding her rule into the sensible world and therein enforcing its behest, most marvellously transmuting the beautiful but uncurrent metal of intellect into the glory of golden fact. Art beyond alchemy! Wonderful of incarnations, incarnate reason! He who dare enter into her holiest of holies, finds there her fires never dim.

§ 33. Ethics is the science of right and wrong. The notion of an act in general (of which it is not considered whether it is right or wrong) is divided according to a rule of reason into that which is right and that which is wrong. Ethics is therefore the science of the law of reason, i. e. (since we have no knowledge of any law not of reason) of law in general; and ethico-active reason is reason acting according to law, i. e. her own law.

§ 34. Here the careless reader will stumble at once upon the apparent antinomy of the law (freedom and nature), which does not yet concern us. For the groundwork of all science, we go back of the sensible into the intelligible world. Now if of any idea we do not make complete abstraction, we are liable in deductions to the error of undistributed middle, a logical snare set at every turn for philosophy. We have previously (§ 14) called attention to the fact that an apriori deduction of morality is habitually demanded by those who have never strictly attempted to divest morality of a completely aposteriori character; and the very difficulty upon which we have paused is due to the remarkable circumstance that we deceive ourselves, persuading ourselves that we have made abstraction of reason from the rational agent, the while nevertheless unconsciously cogitating it as a THING which exists SOMEWHERE and SOMEWHEN. (The ground of abstraction, which underlies the simplest generalization as well as the most ultimate apodict, is deep hid in the very nature of the faculty. We cannot ask why reason is reason, but only what reason is.)

§ 35. The error to which we point is far more extensive and of more serious consequence than may hastily appear. Indeed it is the occasion of the fact to which Mr. KANT refers

(in the transcendental dialectic, commenting upon ARISTOTLE) in remarking that "it is nothing unusual, in common conversation as well as in written works, by comparing the thoughts which an author has delivered upon a subject, to understand him better than he understood himself; insomuch as he may not have sufficiently determined his conception, and thus have sometimes spoken, nay even thought, in opposition to his own opinions." But the mistake occurs often where the conception has been sufficiently determined, and nevertheless the mind is suffered by a sort of carelessness to disregard the determination. And this we take to be the origin and explanation of most of the contradictions into which Mr. KANT has himself apparently fallen. Since the complete definition of the terminology is, especially in such argument as we have approached, of vital importance, it may be well to suggest a few specifications:

§ 36. We understand by noumenon a substance plus the totality of its possible (the totality of the possibility of its) accidents or manifestations: the totality of its real accidents, existent as given through sensibility, we call phenomenon. We think to the phenomenon the same substance as to the noumenon; but (owing to the subjective nature of our representations) we cannot know what (if anything) in the phenomenon, except the substance, belongs also to the noumenon. Noumenon as "an object of a non-sensuous intuition," is an impossibility; for we cannot conceive of a noumenon which might not (in some or other of its modes) become phenomenon, if sensibility were so modified as to receive (intuite) it. "Non-sensuous intuition" is a contradiction in terms; and whatever intuition we think, other than that which we possess, is not non-sensuous, but differently sensuous. The noumenon is therefore no possible object; and the conception of the homo noumenon is that of a mere schema.

§ 37. It will not be understood that we are asserting substance of the EGO, in which we cognize nothing. The permanent in time (substantia phenomenon, matter) is nothing more than a schema of substance, through which we reach as it were to grasp very substance. That complex of mere relations which we call matter, is an attempt to cogitate substance as an entity in the real world and therefore as neces-

sarily possessed of internal determinations in relation to itself (of extensive relations).

§ 38. So that complex of internal determinations which we call *ego*, is an attempt to cogitate *mán* (abstract from the real world) as possessed of relations in the intelligible world. But since the determination of the *homo noumenon* is absolutely internal, and not relatively (in time as opposed to space, which internal is truly external), the relations are no more than a bold figure; and the complex is an empty ethical schema, no more real than a sensible schema.

§ 39. The real is that which exists in sensation. Now nothing can be known experimentally to exist, except it be given in sensation: hence reality is taken for existence, and unreality logically becomes non-existence; while in truth unreality is also unrealized ideality. Reality in time is merely the schema of existence; and to declare even a thing unreal is not to deny its existence.

§ 40. Abstract from time, substance is — substance! Mr. KANT's attempt to define it as that which must be cogitated as subject and never as predicate,\* will not bear scrutiny; for we have already begun by predicating it of its accidents. This confusion may have arisen from not clearly distinguishing subject logical (as opposed to predicate) from subject actual (as opposed to object); but, although substance cannot be cogitated as object, to define it as subject in nowise increases the clearness of the conception, but on the contrary is liable to confuse it by leading to its use as undistributed middle.

§ 41. A faculty acts, and must be able to act, else it were not faculty: in other words, to act is involved in the very notion of faculty, and is a mere deduction. (Not that a faculty must act continuously.)

The action of a faculty is as to its mode more properly termed function. Thus: will is a function of reason; but will is itself cogitated as a faculty when it is viewed as reason acting rather than as an act of reason.

These punctual distinctions are essential to any specula-

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\* See pages 79, 92, 113, 174, 181, 183, 193, 226, 241, 243, 260, Meiklejohn's *Kritik*, Bohn's edition.

tion. For example, synthesis of apprehension in nowise differs from the transcendental synthesis of imagination, nor this from the synthetic unity of apperception upon which all synthesis is founded. But in synthesis of apprehension we cogitate only so much of the activity of consciousness as is indispensably necessary to give unity to the empirical intuition; and we not so much view the result with reference to its unity of the manifold as that we seize upon its manifold in unity. Different names for different phases of the same act draw the attention more or less to the action itself, as the argument may require.

§ 42. Particular faculties of the mind are merely phases of the activity of the EGO, distinguished for purposes of convenient reference. Now when Mr. KANT explains (in the deduction of the categories) that imagination belongs partly to the sensibility, he seems to us merely fall into a confusion of terms. Mr. TUPPER was not far from right when he said that "Imagination is not sense, neither is fancy reflection." Imagination and sensibility are both faculties of the EGO, and both necessary the one to the other (for cognitive purposes); but the one no more belongs to the other than the other to the one. And Mr. KANT's argument to prove that the unity of formal intuition apriori belongs to space and time and not to the conception of the understanding, is nothing but the logical result of confusion and possesses no value.

§ 43. Reason is the sole faculty which an intelligent is cogitated to possess. For convenience, her various aspects or energies are regarded as separate faculties, but faculties subsumed under reason and derived or abstracted out of reason. These are by no means to be looked upon as extensive determinations or limitations, or as distinct, separable, co-ordinate, or subjected faculties; but solely as the one faculty reason taken in a limited view, with reference to her particular use, theoretical or practical. In each energy reason herself is present with her whole force and weight. It cannot be urged that an inferior faculty (e.g. receptivity) may exist without reason; for that fact does not concern the argument, which is not addressed to beasts.

§ 44. As a faculty of perception, reason is termed intuition.

As a faculty of apperception, reason is termed consciousness.

As a faculty of cognition ("for the production of unity of phenomena by virtue of rules"), reason is termed understanding.

As a faculty of subsumption, reason is termed judgment. (E.g., that an object stands under a conception of the understanding, is declared by judgment.)

As a faculty of moral judgment, reason is termed conscience. (Declaring that a given act stands under a rule of right and wrong.)

As a faculty of action (in the sensible world), reason is termed will.

As a faculty of appetite, reason is termed desire (not wish).

As a faculty of desire viewed as habitual, reason is termed appetite.

As the faculty appetite plus the consciousness of her own ability by her own act to produce the object sought, reason is termed choice.

As the faculty of appetite when the said consciousness is not present, reason is termed wish.

§ 45. Surely, the reader may say, here is embarrassment of riches! Riches are wholly relative; and not much may embarrass him who earns but a farthing a day. When the inward ground of the determination of the appetite (consequently when the option) depends upon the reason of the subject himself, the faculty reason is termed will. Choice is therefore appetite in respect to the action; will is appetite in respect of the ground of the action; and wish is appetite inactive. These terms are all needed. And appetite itself in a narrower sense may be taken to signify will or choice when the ground of the determination of the choice does not lie within the reason of the subject himself. For man, as an intelligent living in a sensible world, whose reason is a faculty of receptivity, finds by nature his choice affected by foreign stimuli to so great an extent that his reason continually recalls him to herself and incessantly reconquers her just domain only by force of endless struggle.

§ 46. That a particular is included in a general proposi-



tion, is declared by reason. In this aspect, reason is "the faculty of principles," of "synthetical cognitions from conceptions," "for the production of unity of rules under principles." Like as for convenience the whole activity of reason is figured to be divided and subdivided into various faculties, so the term itself REASON is reserved for this her especial and most supreme energy, which is manifested in treating of naked idea, totally dis severed from even the purest forms of sense. Here reason revels in a new and unknown world, so completely her own that if she lose firm hold on herself she can find no more any ground whereon to rest. Here she exalts her throne and reigns unopposed, herein having no longer to fight the world, the flesh, and the devilish oligarchy of passions, in enforcement of her behests. But this her high place she may not dare to abdicate, not for one instant, in favor of any foreign potentate whatever; for in that one instant she will have resigned not alone her ideal sovereignty, but no less her real title to obedience. He who meanly confesses that his own reason is not his very own, what is he?

§ 47. Although neither the existence nor the possibility of ethico-active reason can be known completely apriori, it yet appears upon the most abstract consideration that to cogitate reason solely as theoretical (speculative) and as possessing no practical power, is absurd; and in view of the rational agent it must also be held self-destructive. If reason is a supreme ruler, she must possess a title to obedience, a power to enforce her commands in the phenomenal world: i. e. she must be a faculty. Else might the subject, while theoretically and in general acknowledging obedience to his sovereign, practically and in every individual fact and instance rebel, impelled thereto by the mechanic necessity of his phenomenal character. And while it is true that the causality of reason in the sensible world cannot be known apriori, it may be known apriori that if the possessor of reason is to reside within the world of nature and to be clothed with a phenomenal character, and if he is to take with him thither his supreme faculty reason, that faculty also must possess a real character, a will. Else were she left behind in the world whence he comes, and were no real faculty. But that she is a real faculty may be known by her phenomenal energy of

understanding, through which alone is given her supersensible ideality. And as he who assails the hypothetical real will can scarcely do so except by a general denial of the real character of reason, he may well be left to extricate himself from an argument which turns upon and devours itself and the very ground upon which it stands.

§ 48. Hence it is proper that an apriori deduction of morality from pure reason should begin hypothetically (§§ 12, 17) by assuming the practical power of spontaneous action which is discovered by reason in experience and immediately by her reclaimed and asserted apodictically. No argument which may seem to deny the possibility of this postulated freedom can possibly be acceptable to reason, which must (§ 12) thereupon recommence and indefatigably continue her investigation till she has established her idea satisfactorily.

§ 49. As an exhibited science, practical reason is no other than speculative reason (§ 32). Now science, always speculative, does not propound theories to account for possibilities: but from the very first establishes its postulates in order to rest thereon ascertained (aposteriori) facts. It is difficult to apprehend anything more ridiculous than a natural philosopher engaged in the deduction of imaginary facts. The fact must be at least apparent (quasi), before the commonest reason will undertake an investigation whether it is real and well grounded.

How then shall reason in the practical field (wherein she is no less one and the same reason) be required to deduce one knows not what, first casting aside her own apodictic deliverances? And with what face shall he who having first conditionally accepted a natural fact calls then upon reason to account for it, demand that the moralist shall first reject the experienced fact freedom and shall thereafter categorically deduce — what shall we say?

§ 50. Descending from the exalted realm of reason into the real world, we find the fact morality, a fact which ever-active conscious reason of all grades and in all times persistently claims as her very own. And since she cannot refuse to maintain and establish her very own, she boldly postulates her hypothesis, freedom of will, and deduces thence morality.

To him who objects that the postulated causality conflicts with the necessity of nature, she proves by the critical analysis of her own functions and faculties that no real conflict exists; and him who flatly denies both her (aposteriori) fact and her hypothetic spontaneity (apriori act), she meets upon equal ground and strips of every, even the simplest, principle of understanding.

§ 51. The reconciliation of freedom and necessity is the highest aim of the noblest and purest of philosophers. The argument ought to be familiar to all disciples of IMMANUEL KANT. To reproduce it has not herein been our purpose, but to sketch cursorily the reach and extent of the faculty reason (§ 13). From this point, taking our stand upon the firm fact morality, and challenging any other deduction whatever than that from the spontaneous activity of reason, and resting our claim to a demonstrated science wholly upon rational consciousness of the two states of action ideal and sensible (in other words, upon the conscience of humanity), we concern ourselves merely with so much of speculative reason (commonly termed practical reason) as, knowing nothing of any object of intuition, has nothing to investigate but the power of her own will to make objects real, and that solely in respect of its form and principle. For him who is habituated to abstract thought, it is an easy task to make an apriori deduction of the law of reason, and thence of all laws and morals (i. e. of particular duties). For this purpose, the possibility of practical principles (the possibility of ethico-active reason: §§ 33, 48) must be assumed.

§ 52. It is because of the absolute impossibility of establishing completely apriori the reality of the law's action (§§ 12, 22, 23, 47), that students of philosophy have sometimes apparently abandoned morality as (*qualibet, non quasi*) based upon reason. But reason does not desert her subjects and possessors, though exorcised by the authority of a thousand ages. From the beginning even until now, her humblest agents have been by her assured of the great fact of her vitality in sense, and of the greater fact of the complete harmony of that vitality with the mechanical course of external nature; and this her assurance is so perfect and so apodictic that he who assumes to doubt it thereby falls into an inevitable an-

tinomy with his own faith and conduct (conflict of principles and maxims), patent to all who choose to note.

§ 53. The practical problem which we have to solve is not emancipation from, but control of, nature. In other words, the duty of man is to maintain the supremacy of reason, not to uproot the necessity of nature.

Out of this struggle comes ethic growth, the true virile strength, the highest virtue. And since a mere man cannot arrogantly assume to state the ends of human existence, yet is impelled by the necessity of his rational nature and method to project some end toward which he must aim, he finds the highest satisfaction in declaring as end (for him, so far as he can know) virtue, which consists solely in the ceaseless endeavor to obey the law of reason.

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## CONSIDERATIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF A UNIVERSAL SPIRIT.

Written in 1702, and translated from the French of G. W. LEIBNITZ, by A. E. KROEGER.

[The following essay will no doubt be welcomed by all who have found it difficult to fully understand Leibnitz's *Monadology*, published in No. 3, vol. i., of this Journal. In the present essay Leibnitz touches and states with the utmost clearness two of the three great principles of his philosophy: the doctrine of Monads—here called particular souls—and the doctrine of a Preestablished Harmony. It will be well to read also, in connection with this article, Leibnitz on the "Active Force of the Body, the Soul, and the Souls of Animals," published in No. 1, vol. ii., of this Journal.—EDITOR.]

Many ingenious persons have believed and believe yet to-day that there is only one spirit, which is universal and which animates all the universe and all of its parts, each according to its structure and according to the organs which it encounters, just as the same breath of air causes the various pipes of an organ to sound differently; and that thus when an animal has its organs in good order this spirit creates therein the effect of a particular soul, whereas when these organs become corrupt that particular soul turns into nothing, or, so to speak, returns into the ocean of the universal spirit.